

This week, I met with officials from the Office of National Drug Control Policy, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Department of Homeland Security to develop a strategy to deal with marijuana production on federal lands in Northern California. I arranged this meeting as I noted [last November](#) , and I was pleased to have several other members of Congress join us.

Marijuana production has been a plague on our federal lands that threatens public safety and the use of our public lands. These drug traffickers are armed, dangerous, and have repeatedly fired on law enforcement officials. It is only a matter of time before tragedy strikes and increased action must be taken. Local law enforcement has been forced to bear the brunt of this public safety threat and though they have done an excellent job, they simply don't have the resources necessary to eradicate the drug production.

During the meeting, senior leaders from these agencies indicated that they are coordinating efforts far better than in previous years, that they have benefitted from increased resources provided by Congress, and that they now feel they are pursuing a balanced strategy focused on both eradicating the drugs and investigating the traffickers. But they also acknowledged that they are having a difficult time at dismantling the drug trafficking organizations and bringing these criminals to justice, and that they currently do not have a thorough understanding of how and where the cartels convert the plants into market-ready drugs after they leave our public lands. These admissions demonstrate the severity of this crisis and the need for even greater efforts to rid our forests and nation of this problem. Indeed, short-term success at eradicating plants will only be meaningful in the long term if our law enforcement personnel can strike these drug trafficking organizations at their core, arresting and prosecuting the culprits to the full extent of the law.

Northern Californians should not have to worry about threats from Mexican drug cartels. I am continuing to work with other members of Congress and these agencies to ensure that law enforcement officials, both local and federal, have the tools they need to eliminate this threat and keep our public lands safe. This issue must take a greater priority within the federal government with increased coordination and resources to fight back against this threat.